	Direct Taxes	Indirect Taxes
(b) Approximate number of cases pending in Courts	35,000	20,000

(c) to (e). The Government is planning to set up an Appellate Tribunal for Customs and Central Excise for adjudication of disputes relating to determination of the rates of duties of Customs and Central Excise and the value of goods. The details of the proposal are being worked out. As regards the time frame, it is not possible to indicate it at present.

The Finance Minister has also given an assurance in his Budget Speech on 29.2.92 that the Government is planning to set up the National Court of Direct Taxes. Necessary steps would be taken to fulfil this assurance at an early date.

Jet Trainers

5026. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have asked the British and the French companies to submit proposals from the supply of advanced jet trainers to be inducted by the Indian Air Force;

(b) if so, the reasons for inviting fresh proposals and the fate of earlier obtained proposals in this regard; and

(c) the time schedule fixed for acceptance of the proposals and decision to be made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b). Fresh proposals for the acquisition of Advanced Jet Trainers for meeting the requirements of the IAF have been invited from the short-listed foreign suppliers, as earlier proposals obtained several years ago have become invalid.

(c) It is not possible to fix any time-schedule for a final decision in the matter.

Assistance for Development of Jute Sector

5027. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have urged the Food and Agricultural Organisation and other Multilateral organisations to provide more assistance for the development of the jute sector; and

(b) if so, the details of the assistance sought for this purpose during 1991-92 and 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES(SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) (a) and (b). A National Programme for the development of the jute sector in India envisaging an assistance of US$ 23 million during Eighth Five Year Plan from UNDP has been formulated and submitted to UNDP.

Trade with French Businessmen

5028. SHRI PARATAPRAO B. BHONSLE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether French businessmen are keen to have trade with India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be